

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 530
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
DIA WASHDC
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, MARR, MPOL, IN
SUBJECT: FOREIGN POLICY SECTION OF DEFENSE MINISTRY
ANNUAL REPORT (1977-78)

REF: 77 DELHI 9123

SUMMARY. THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR
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1976-77, WHICH WAS PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT MARCH 27,
REFLECTS THE GOI'S EMPHASIS IN THE PAST YEAR OF IMPROVING
RELATIONS BILATEALLY WITH ALL COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY
NEIGHBORING STATES, AND CONSEQUENTLY IS LESS NEGATIVE
THAN LAST YEAR'S REPORT (REFTEL). WHILE POINTING TO
IMPROVEMENTS IN RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH
AND CHINA, HOWEVER, THE BRIEF INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

ON "NATIONAL SECURITY IN PERSPECTIVE" CONCLUDES
"DESPITE THESE, THERE IS LITTLE CHANGE IN OUR SECURITY
ENVIRONMENT AS THE SOURCES OF TENSION AND CAUSES OF
CONFLICTS HAVE NOT BEEN SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED. THE
THREAT TO OUR SECURITY CONTINUES..." DURING
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE DEFENSE BUDGET MARCH 27,
LITTLE ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS.
DEFENSE MINISTER JAGJIVAN RAM REITERATED THE GOOD
NEIGHBOR POLICY. WE ARE AWAITING ISSUANCE IN APRIL OF
THE MEA ANNUAL REPORT, WHICH WE ANTICIPATE WILL ONCE
AGAIN BE MORE MODERATE THAN THE DEFENCE MINISTRY'S
ASSESSMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. USSR AND USA: THE MOD'S ANNUAL REPORT BEGINS WITH
A STATEMENT OF THE JANATA GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF
BENEFICIAL BILATERALISM WITH ALL COUNTRIES. IT STATES
THAT RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION HAVE "CONTINUED TO
BE CLOSE" AND THAT INDIA HAS "ENTERED A NEW PHASE OF
GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION" IN RELATIONS
WITH THE UNITED STATES. IT ALSO NOTES THAT RELATIONS
"HAVE GROWN IN SPIRIT AND CONTENT" WITH BHUTAN, NEPAL,
BURMA, SRI LANKA, AFGHANISTAN AND BANGLADESH. (THESE
ARE ALL NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WITH WHOM THERE HAVE
BEEN HIGH-LEVEL VISITS; ONLY PAKISTAN IS OMITTED.)

2. CHINA: INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH CHINA "HAVE CONTINUED
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TO SHOW A DEGREE OF IMPROVEMENT THROUGH OUR BASIC
DIFFERENCES ON THE BORDER QUESTION REMAIN UNRESOLVED."
THE REPORT NOTES THAT THERE HAS BEEN "NO APPRECIABLE
CHANGE" IN THE OVERALL STRENGTH OF CHINESE ARMED
FORCES IN TIBET, BUT ADDS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN "NOTABLE
IMPROVEMENTS IN THEIR LOGISTICAL CAPABILITIES."

3. PAKISTAN: THE REPORT STATES THAT INDIA HAS PURSUED
NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS TO ENSURE DURABLE PEACE AND
TO PROMOTE BENEFICIAL BILATERAL COOPERATION AND ADDS
THAT THE SCARCE MATERIAL RESOURCES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES
SHOULD BE USED FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT "INSTEAD OF
BEING SPENT ON AN UNPRODUCTIVE ARMS RACE. THE MOD
STATES THAT PAKISTAN HAS "PROCURED MILITARY HARDWARE
DURING THE YEAR FROM VARIOUS SOURCES" AND COMMENTS
THAT IN LAST YEAR'S REPORT "WE HAVE ALREADY NOTED...
THAT PAKISTAN HAD MADE IMPRESSIVE ADDITIONS TO THE
PRE-1971 LEVEL OF STRENGTH IN HER ARMED FORCES BOTH
QUANTITATIVELY AND QUALITATIVELY." THE REPORT CONTINUES:
"PAKISTAN IS STILL LOOKING FOR MORE SOPHISTICATED ARMS.
THIS, WE FEEL, IS NOT IN CONSONANCE WITH THE
PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO

COUNTRIES AND HENCE CANNOT BUT BE A MATTER
OF CONCERN TO US." THE REPORT SAYS THAT EXCEPT FOR A
FEW LOCAL INCIDENTS OF FIRING BY PAKISTANI TROOPS,
CIVILIAN INTRUSIONS ACROSS THE LINE OF CONTROL AND
"VIOLATIONS OF OUR AIR SPACE", THE BORDER SITUATION
REMAINED PEACEFUL.

4. BANGLADESH: IN CONTRAST TO THE SHARPLY NEGATIVE
TONE OF LAST YEAR'S REMARKS, THE MOD THIS YEAR LAUDS
THE "PERCEPTIBLE IMPROVEMENT" IN THE CLIMATE OF RELATIONS
WITH BANGLADESH AND SAYS THAT INDIA IS "VITALLY INTERESTED
IN A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS BANGLADESH." THE FARAKKA
AGREEMENT IS CALLED A "VERY WELCOME DEVELOPMENT" AND
ONE WHICH "VINDICATES OUR FAITH" THAT ALL PROBLEMS
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BETWEEN STATES CAN BE RESOLVED IN A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL
COOPERATION. PRESIDENT ZIA'S VISIT TO INDIA WAS CALLED
A "FURTHER STEP" IN PROMOTING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

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5. INDIAN OCEAN: THE REPORT RESTATES THE GOI'S "CONSISTENT" OPPOSITION TO THE "EXTENTION OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY TO OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION. SUCH RIVALRIES AND "FOREIGN MILITARY BASES" ARE SEEN AS POSING A THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF THE LITTORAL AND HINTERLAND STATES. THE MOD DOES NOT REPEAT LAST YEAR'S REFERENCE TO DIEGO GARCIA NOR ITS CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ISSUE AS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"SERIOUS CONCERN TO INDIA." THE REPORT ENDORSES THE IOZP AND WELCOMES MOVES TOWARD THE DEMILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN, SINCERELY HOPING THAT THE SOVIET-AMERICAN TALKS "WOULD LEAD TO AN EARLY ELIMINATION OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY IN THE REGION." HOWEVER, IT COMPLAINS THAT THE PROPOSAL "TO ONLY LIMIT ARMS DEVELOPMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN... FALLS FAR SHORT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PEACE IN THE REGION." IT IS THE MOD'S "CONSIDERED VIEW" THAT THE REGION SHOULD BE COMPLETELY FREE OF BIG POWER RIVALRY AND FOREIGN MILITARY BASES.

6. DISARMAMENT: THE REPORT RESTATES THE GOI'S SUPPORT FOR GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT, AND ITS OPPOSITION TO NOT ONLY THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUT ALSO THE "ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT" OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS THEMSELVES. THE REPORT DEPLORES THE WASTEFUL EXPENDITURES OF THE ARMS RACE AND WELCOMES "ALL MOVES" THAT MAY LEAD TO "MEANINGFUL EAST-WEST ARMS CONTROL BOTH IN THE STRATEGIC AND IN THE CONVENTIONAL MILITARY SPHERES."

7. SOUTHERN AFRICA: THE REPORT REITERATES INDIAN SUPPORT FOR THE FREEDOM STRUGGLES IN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE AND CONDEMNS APARTHEID.

8. DURING THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE MARCH 27, DFENSE MINISTER JAGJIVAN RAM REITERATED THE JANATA GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY AND SAID THAT INDIA HAD EXTENDED THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP TO PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH AND

CHINA AND WAS GRATIFIED THAT THERE WERE SIGNS OF
RESPONSE. ABOUT CHINA, HE SAID THAT RELATIONS MUST BE
"FREE FROM TENSIONS" AND ONCE THEY WERE THERE
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WOULD BE SEVERAL WAYS OF ESTABLISHING FRIENDLY TIES.
RESPONDING TO A QUESTION ABOUT INDIA'S PREVIOUS OFFER
OF A "NO-WAR PACT" WITH PAKISTAN, RAM SAID THAT IF
RELATIONS WERE NORMALIZED THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR
SUCH A PACT.
GOHEEN

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